

VU Research Portal

The impact of urban resurgence on public green space

Koomen, Eric

2019

document version

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link to publication in VU Research Portal](#)

citation for published version (APA)

Koomen, E. (2019). *The impact of urban resurgence on public green space*. 39-41. Abstract from AGORA Thematic Dialogue 2019, Riga, Latvia.

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal ?

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

E-mail address:

vuresearchportal.ub@vu.nl

Our research project ‘Urbanising in Place’ explores possibilities for agro-ecological urbanism in the public domain of the city. We are looking forward to discuss new models of urbanism where food is taken into account in planning the city, something that was there for decades but disappeared with the process of globalisation. This is one of the challenges in the

public domain, owned by the city, designed by public policy and needs new policy documents, research and innovation.

Key Words: urban farming; food production; agroecological urbanism;

Involvement in the following projects regarding public space and related issues

We are currently involved in the Sustainable Urbanisation Global Initiative (SUGI)/Food-Water-Energy Nexus project. ‘Urbanizing in place’ will explore how farming and food growing practices on the metropolitan fringe, threatened by an ever expanding urbanisation, may be reimagined and reconfigured within what we call ‘agroecological urbanism’: a model of urbanisation which places food, urban metabolic cycles and an ethics of land stewardship, equality and solidarity at its core. The project will explore the physical and metabolic context, scenarios for economic valorisation and political processes that can enable alternative metabolic capabilities, and the specific practices and configurations that farmers and food growing communities could develop in order to regain control over resources and claim an active role as agroecological urban food-water-energy actors.

Eric Koomen

**associate professor, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
Netherlands, Amsterdam**

<https://research.vu.nl/en/persons/eric-koomen>

The impact of urban resurgence on public green space

Cities are great places for interaction and innovation that continue to attract new waves of migrants (Florida et al., 2017; Glaeser and Gottlieb, 2006). This is reflected in the resurgence of most cities in Europe since the turn of the century (or even earlier, see: Turok and Mykhnenko, 2008). Their current popularity may, however, threaten their livability as house prices are soaring (Claeys et al., 2019), city tourism results in overcrowding (Namberger et al., 2019), congestion limits accessibility (Moya-Gómez and

García-Palomares, 2017) and green space is lost to urban development (Russo and Cirella, 2018).

The negative impacts of urban development are partly exacerbated by compact city policies that favour densification over expansion (Broitman and Koomen, 2015), giving rise to the so-called compact city paradox (Wiersinga, 1997). Cities are deemed to be more sustainable when they remain compact and foster high densities as this, for example, limits car travel (Newman and Kenworthy, 2006), but this comes at the cost of becoming less livable (Neuman, 2005) with loss of public green space as one of the most obvious consequences (Lin et al., 2015). This is particularly

worrisome in view of climate change that strengthens the need for green space to, for example, limit the formation of urban heat islands (Rafiee et al., 2016) and allow for water storage or infiltration in case of more frequent heavy rain storms (Voskamp and Van de Ven, 2015).

It is not easy to strike a balance between the positive and negative impacts of compact city development as their relative importance differs per city depending on the local context (Westerink et al., 2013). To support the careful management of public green spaces in urban areas it is thus essential to understand their provision of ecosystem services in relation to local demand. Based on recent research on Dutch cities, I will comment on the relative importance of densification versus expansion in accommodating the growth in housing since 2000, changes in the provision of urban green space and impacts on limiting the urban heat island effect. We find that Dutch cities become evermore important focal points for residential development. The majority of the residences created in the past few years was added to existing residential and industrial neighbourhoods within urban areas and only a small proportion replaced urban green space. Urban heat islands seem to be influenced more by urban expansion that extends their later extent than infill on urban green spaces that results in local increases.

References

- Broitman, D., Koomen, E. (2015) Residential density change: Densification and urban expansion. *Computers, Environment and Urban Systems* 54, 32-46.
- Claeys, G., Efstathiou, K., Schoenmaker, D., (2019) Soaring House Prices in Major Cities: How to Spot and Moderate Them, in: Nijsskens, R., Lohuis, M., Hilbers, P., Heeringa, W. (Eds.), *Hot Property: The Housing Market in Major Cities*. Springer International Publishing, Cham, pp.169-179.
- Florida, R., Adler, P., Mellander, C. (2017) The city as innovation machine. *Regional Studies* 51, 86-96.
- Glaeser, E.L., Gottlieb, J.D. (2006) Urban Resurgence and the Consumer City. *Urban Studies* 43, 1275-1299.
- Lin, B., Meyers, J., Barnett, G. (2015) Understanding the potential loss and inequities of green space distribution with urban densification. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening* 14, 952-958.
- Moya-Gómez, B., García-Palomares, J.C. (2017) The impacts of congestion on automobile accessibility. What happens in large European cities? *Journal of Transport Geography* 62, 148-159.
- Namberger, P., Jackisch, S., Schmude, J., Karl, M. (2019) Overcrowding, Overtourism and Local Level Disturbance: How Much Can Munich Handle? *Tourism Planning & Development* 16, 452-472.
- Neuman, M. (2005) The Compact City Fallacy. *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 25, 11-26.
- Newman, P., Kenworthy, J. (2006) Urban design to reduce automobile dependence. *Opolis* 2, 35-52.
- Rafiee, A., Dias, E., Koomen, E. (2016) Local impact of tree volume on nocturnal urban heat island: A case study in Amsterdam. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening* 16, 50-61.
- Russo, A., Cirella, G.T. (2018) Modern Compact Cities: How Much Greenery Do We Need? *International journal of environmental research and public health* 15, 2180.
- Turok, I., Mykhnenko, V. (2008) Resurgent European cities? *Urban Research & Practice* 1, 54-77.
- Voskamp, I.M., Van de Ven, F.H.M. (2015) Planning support system for climate

adaptation: Composing effective sets of blue-green measures to reduce urban vulnerability to extreme weather events. *Building and Environment* 83, 159-167.

Westerink, J., Haase, D., Bauer, A., Ravetz, J., Jarrige, F., Aalbers, C.B.E.M. (2013) Dealing with Sustainability Trade-Offs of the Compact City in Peri-Urban Planning Across European

City Regions. *European Planning Studies* 21, 473-497.

Wiersinga, W. (1997) Compensation as a strategy for improving environmental quality in compact cities. Amsterdam: Bureau SME.

Key Words: Green Spaces; densification; livability; Nature based solutions; DILEMMAS

Involvement in the following projects regarding public space and related issues

- Space for employment (NWO-SURF)
- SIMETRI (JPI-Urban Europe)

Alisa Korolova

**Lecturer, Researcher, PhD Student; Riga Technical University, Faculty of Architecture
Latvia, Riga**

Competing interests of different stakeholders are transforming public open space in large housing estates into the places of conflict. Despite the fact, that many large housing estates are characterized by large amount of green open space between houses, undefined nature of these areas, as well as lack of maintenance, growing number of cars, overall decay of recreational amenities, lead to conflicts between different user groups.

Relatively small size of apartments, as well as lack of community space indoors, makes the outdoor public space a crucial place for social cohesion, participation in community life, etc. These places can promote active lifestyle and positively influence inhabitant's well-being. Still, it's difficult to make these spaces more liveable as often people don't feel attached to them. Also, they are

not on the top of the preference list by local authorities to deal with.

Private ownership of courtyards sometimes leads to degradation of the territory until the investor comes with a certain development project. Infill development often creates gated or partly closed communities, fostering social segregation in the area. On the other hand, there has been an increase in the local activism. Neighbourhood associations and individuals are trying to participate or even force public open space transformations, to make it more attractive, inclusive and liveable.

Thus, it's a crucial question how to deal with all these initiatives and promote balanced, sustainable, and inclusive urban development.

Key Words: mobile urban gardening, large housing estates, conflicts of uses, local activism